LEGISLATIVE

RESEARCH COMMISSION

REPORT
TO THE

1979
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SECOND SESSION, 1980

WILDERNESS CAMP
SURRY COUNTY

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STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH COMMISSION

STATE LEGISLATIVE BUILDING

RALEIGH 27611

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE 1979 GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

The Legislative Research Commission herewith reports to the 1979 General Assembly, Second Session 1980, of North Carolina on the matter of the Wilderness Camp in Surry County. The report is made pursuant to Senate Joint Resolution 667 of the 1979 General Assembly and at the direction of the Cochairmen of the Legislative Research Commission under the authority of G.S. 120-30-17(6).

This report was prepared by the Legislative Research Commission Committee on Wilderness Camp in Surry County and it is transmitted by the Legislative Research Commission to the members of the 1979 General Assembly, Second Session 1980, for their consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

W. Craig Lawing

Carl J. Stewart, Jr.

Cochairmen

LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH COMMISSION

ARTICLE 6B.

Legislative Research Commission.

§ 120-30.10. Creation; appointment of members; members ex officio. — (a) There is hereby created a Legislative Research Commission to consist of five Senators to be appointed by the President pro tempore of the Senate and five Representatives to be appointed by the Speaker of the House. The President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House shall be ex officio members of the Legislative Research Commission. Provided, that when the President of the Senate has been elected by the Senate from its own membership, then the President of the Senate shall make the appointments of the Senate members of the Legislative Research Commission, shall serve ex officio as a member of the Commission and shall perform the duties otherwise vested in the President pro tempore by G.S. 120-30.13 and 120-30.14.

(b) The cochairmen of the Legislative Research Commission may appoint additional members of the General Assembly to work with the regular members of the Research Commission on study committees. The terms of the additional study committee members shall be limited by the same provisions as apply to regular commission members, and they may be further limited by the appointing authorities.

(c) The cochairmen of the Legislative Research Commission may appoint persons who are not members of the General Assembly to advisory subcommittees. The terms of advisory subcommittee members shall be limited by the same provisions as apply to regular Commission members, and they may be further limited by the appointing authorities. (1965, c. 1045, s. 1; 1975, c. 692, s. 1.)

* * * * * * * * *

§ 120-30.17. Powers and duties. — The Legislative Research Commission has the following powers and duties:

(1) Pursuant to the direction of the General Assembly or either house thereof, or of the chairmen, to make or cause to be made such studies of and investigations into governmental agencies and institutions and matters of public policy as will aid the General Assembly in performing its duties in the most efficient and effective manner.

(2) To report to the General Assembly the results of the studies made. The reports may be accompanied by the recommendations of the Commission and bills suggested to effectuate the recommendations.

(3), (4) Repealed by Session Laws 1969, c. 1184, s. 8. (1965, c. 1045, s. 8; 1969, c. 1184, s. 8.)

(5) To review the rules of all administrative agencies pursuant to Article 6C of this Chapter to determine whether or not the agencies acted within their statutory authority in promulgating the rules.

(6) To meet during the regular session of the General Assembly only for the purposes of reviewing rules pursuant to G.S. 120-30.30 or holding public hearings pursuant to G.S. 120-30.35. (1965, c. 1045, s. 8; 1969, c. 1184, s. 8; 1977, c. 915, s. 3.)

MEMBERSHIP

House Speaker Carl J. Stewart, Jr., Chairman	Senate President Pro Tempore W. Craig Lawing, Chairman
Representative Chris S. Barker, Jr.	Senator Henson P. Barnes
Representative John R. Gamble, Jr.	Senator Melvin R. Daniels, Jr.
Representative Parks Helms	Senator Carolyn Mathis
Representative John J. Hunt	Senator R. C. Soles, Jr.
Representative Lura S. Tally	Senator Charles E. Vickery

INTRODUCTION

The Legislative Research Commission, authorized by Article 6B of Chapter 120 of the General Statutes (G.S. 120-30-17(6)), is a general purpose study group whose duties are that of making or causing to be made, upon the direction of the General Assembly, "such studies of and investigations into governmental agencies and institutions and matters of public policy as will aid the General Assembly in performing its duties in the most efficient and effective manner."

By Senate Joint Resolution 667 (1979 Session Laws, Resolution 69) the Legislative Research Commission was authorized to undertake a study of the Wilderness Camp in Surry County which was to answer questions related to the opposition expressed by local residents concerning the placement of the camp in Low Gap, Surry County. (See Appendix A.) In order to accomplish these tasks, Representative John R. Gamble, Jr., as a member of the Legislative Research Commission, was appointed to coordinate and oversee the Study of the Wilderness Camp in Surry County. Senator George W. Marion, Jr. and Representative Louise S. Brennan were appointed CoChairmen. The other members appointed were Representative T. Clyde Auman; Senators Donald R. Kincaid and Royce P. Thomas; and public members Mr. Louis H. Comer and Mr. Don Snow. The Legislative Services Office provided staff assistance to the Committee for this study.

The Minutes of the Committee meetings reflect the statements and discussions of each meeting. All of this information is included in the Committee files.

BACKGROUND

As late as 1972, North Carolina had more children in training schools than any other state in the union. A recognition of this fact led the General Assembly and its committees and the Department of Human Resources to look for alternatives to institutionalization for some of these children. In late 1976 and early 1977, the Eckerd Foundation made overtures to executive and legislative officials in North Carolina about the possibility of a joint venture which would establish in this state therapeutic wilderness camping based upon the Florida model which the Foundation had already developed. As a result, members of the General Assembly and representatives of the Governor made a trip to Florida to observe their camps. Subsequently, based upon their endorsement of the Eckerd program to be used in North Carolina, Advisory Budget Commission approval of $60,000 was granted on May 13, 1977, for the Eckerd Foundation to develop plans and begin staffing and training employees for the North Carolina system. The General Assembly in 1977 appropriated $1.3 million for 1977-78 and $1.8 million for 1978-79 for a therapeutic camping program as an alternative to training schools and hospitals for children with problems. This money was to support the establishment of four such camps, including the Surry County site.

Based upon the intent of the General Assembly, the Eckerd Foundation, which operates five such facilities in Florida, was designated to provide this service for our state. Under the terms of the agreement between the State and the Eckerd Foundation, the Foundation is responsible for building and operating the camps. The State purchases care from the Eckerd Foundation on a per child basis.

North Carolina's therapeutic camping program is an alternate treatment process for children who have behavioral problems and/or are in conflict with the law. The program serves children with behavior problems who may be unusually aggressive and cannot function in a normal community, school, or family setting. The therapeutic camping program is an alternative to specially designed community or institutional programs.

The campers are placed in carefully supervised dynamic group experiences, led by trained staff who are committed to helping them achieve their growth potential. The program goal is to "graduate" campers so they may return to family, school, and community. Specifically, the camper completing the program should have the ability to re-enter the formal educational system; to be a contributing citizen to the community; to handle an average amount of stress in a family environment; and to have developed feelings of pride, self-esteem, self-worth, and self-discipline.

The vital ingredient of the program is the interaction of the people involved. The most important interactions are among the camper, the group, and the staff. Other essential interactions take place between the camper's family and the camp staff and between the

family and the local referring agency worker.

The program places campers in a setting where cooperation is a necessity. The camper learns how to work with others with similar problems. To foster cooperation, the campers build their semi-permanent shelters, develop menus for cooking their own meals two days a week, and plan their own activities for the week or for a trip away from the camp setting. The campers are given the task of developing responsibility and self-discipline within the group. Peer group pressure is the basis of the therapeutic process within the group.

The camper, upon admission, is placed in a group of up to 10 campers who are supervised constantly by trained counselors. The counselors provide the campers with appropriate models of healthy life styles which campers are encouraged to follow. Counselors are with the campers 24 hours a day and are helping friends, big brothers, or play a parental role--whichever is appropriate for the situation.

The campers and/or counselors handle breakdowns in responsibility or self-discipline when they arise. There is no specific time each day for individual problem solving. As problems arise, all activity stops and the problem of the individual is solved before the group goes on to other activities. In this way, the camper comes to realize the group's concern for each of its members.

As the campers move through the group experience, they acquire self-esteem and a sense of identity.

The resulting growth enables the campers to lead a more responsible and disciplined life when they return to their community, home,

and school.

The establishment of the first three camps progressed smoothly. (See a listing of the camps as Appendix B.) With the establishment of the fourth camp on Saddle Mountain in Surry County, however, there arose a hue and cry from the citizens in that area which their legislative delegation brought to the attention of the 1979 General Assembly. Since the State reserves the right, in its contract with Eckerd, to approve the site of each camp, the question assigned by the General Assembly to the Legislative Research Commission's Committee on Wilderness Camp in Surry County was "should the General Assembly deny the use of state funds to purchase care for children in the therapeutic wilderness camp in Surry County?"

PROCEEDINGS

The Legislative Research Commission's Committee on Wilderness Camp in Surry County held four meetings during the course of its deliberations. The second and third meetings were devoted to fact-finding and information-gathering about the therapeutic camping program in general and how it compares with other treatment programs. Various persons and agencies concerned with children's programs were invited to appear before the Committee. (See Appendix C.)

During the second meeting the Committee held a general discussion of the census of the camps, recidivistic factors and experiences and comparisons of training schools to wilderness camps. A statistical profile of each camp was presented to the Committee along

with some personal views by court counselors who strongly supported the wilderness camping program. The Committee was informed that courts often have no place to refer children whose problems indicate a need for facilities other than training schools.

The third meeting was held in Surry County for the purpose of touring the Wilderness Camp and, also, to hold a public hearing at the Low Gap School. The Committee convened at the Administration Building of the camp and were met by officials of the Eckerd Foundation along with the camp counselors. The Committee toured several of the semipermanent camp sites and talked extensively with the campers.

The Committee reconvened later that night at the Low Gap School for the public hearing which was to determine if the passage of time had made any difference in the negative feelings of the local people. Only one person spoke in opposition to the camp. (See Appendix D.)

CONCLUSIONS

The Committee, after review of the subjects, suggests that no specific legislation is needed but reports the following to the General Assembly:

1. The Committee recommends that the State of North Carolina continue its participation in the wilderness camping program. This specifically refers to the camp in Surry County in which the Committee was primarily concerned. Our investigation has uncovered nothing contrary to the mission and purposes of the camping program.

2. The Committee is particularly impressed with the cooperative arrangements between the Foundation, established through private enterprise, and State Government. This arrangement has led to benefits both therapeutic and financial which should only help in providing the best services for our children. The Committee would encourage both parties to the contract to go forward. Legislative committees should continue the monitoring of the contracted arrangements and should insure that this program pursue independence from State control.

3. After looking at the census of the camps and comparing the wilderness camping program to other programs, the Committee believes that the legislative and executive branches should explore the feasibility of establishing other camps. The point was vividly made by several persons appearing before the Committee that North Carolina had not totally accepted its responsibility to provide good treatment facility alternatives for behaviorally and emotionally disturbed children. The Committee was surprised to learn that there is no camp for girls and would suggest that this need be met immediately.

4. It is evident to the Committee that the Department of Human Resources and its agents have done a poor job in preparing the Low Gap Community for the placement of the camp. With the proper groundwork, much of the opposition could have been handled in a more positive manner. It is suggested that liaison be established with the site communities through community advisory committees composed of a majority of local residents from the area

affected. This should be the responsibility of both the Department of Human Resources and the Board that will oversee the operation of the camps.

A P P E N D I C E S A - D

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 1979
RATIFIED BILL

RESOLUTION 69

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 667

A JOINT RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH COMMISSION TO STUDY THE DRIVERS' EDUCATION AND THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS' PROGRAMS.

Whereas, the Drivers' Education Program for students in the public schools and the School Bus Drivers' Program have become of increasing public concern because of recent dramatic and tragic events; and

Whereas, it is a matter of vital concern to the State of North Carolina to provide adequate drivers' education to young people in school and to ensure that the children of this State are carried to and from school safely; and

Whereas, there is not at present sufficient information to enable the General Assembly adequately to evaluate the present Drivers' Education and School Bus Drivers' Programs and to recommend necessary improvements; and

Whereas, the Legislative Research Commission alone has the funding and the management resources adequately to evaluate the present Drivers' Education and School Bus Drivers' Programs and to recommend necessary improvements;

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring:

Section 1. The Legislative Research Commission may evaluate the present Drivers' Education and School Bus Drivers'

rograms in the public schools and make recommendations for ecessary improvements to the 1981 Session of the General ssembly.

Sec. 2. The Legislative Research Commission is further uthorized to study the Wilderness Camp in Surry County.

Sec. 3. This act is effective upon ratification.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified, his the 8th day of June, 1979.

JAMES C. GREEN

James C. Green

President of the Senate

CARL J. STEWART, JR.

Carl J. Stewart, Jr.

Speaker of the House of Representatives

APPENDIX B

1. Camp E-Toh-Kalu was established in the western part of the State outside of Hendersonville, N. C. in September 1977. The first child was admitted for treatment in December 1977 and the camp reached its capacity by March 1978.

2. Camp E-Ku-Sumee was established in the southern part of the State outside of Candor, N. C. in October 1977. The first child was admitted for treatment in March 1978 and the camp reached its capacity by June 1978.

3. Camp E-Ma-Henwu was established in the eastern part of the State outside of Morehead City, N. C. in October 1978. The first child was admitted for treatment in January 1979.

4. Camp E-Mun-Talee is being established at this time in the northern part of the State on Saddle Mountain in Surry County. The first child was admitted for treatment in April 1979.

PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE

Mr. Thomas Barnett, Contract Manager, Therapeutic Camping, Department of Human Resources

Mr. Louie Barrington, Director of Surry County Wilderness Camp

Mr. George Birchette, Executive Director of Surry Friends of Youth

Judge Coy E. Brewer, Jr., President of EWES of North Carolina

Mr. Charles M. Carson, Low Gap Resident

Ms. Linda Chaney, Juvenile Court Counselor

Mr. Louis Christian, Chief of Operations Section, Office of the Secretary, Department of Human Resources

Dr. Thomas Danek, Administrator, Juvenile Services, Administrative Office of the Courts

The Honorable David Diamont, House of Representatives 28th District

The Reverend Woody Flippen, Minister of Low Gap

Mr. Carroll Gardner

Mr. Tom Gilmore, Deputy Secretary, Department of Human Resources

Mrs. Cama Merritt, Attorney

Mr. John Niblock, Director of Governors Advocacy Council on Youth

Mr. Steve Petlitz, Representative, Mount Airy Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Gerald S. Rehm, Executive Director, Eckerd Foundation Educational System Camping Program

Mr. Dwight Sanderford, Youth Services, Department of Correction

Mr. Guy Spearman, Director Administration, Eckerd Foundation

Mr. Mike Watson, Assistant Director, Division of Youth Services, Department of Human Resources

Ms. Pam White, Surry Friends of Youth

Mr. Steve Williams, Wake County Chief Court Counselor

Mr. William Windley, Director of Division of Youth Services, Department of Human Resources

Mr. Shep Young, Director of Programs at Camps, Eckerd Foundation

APPENDIX D

PUBLIC HEARING

LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH COMMISSION
COMMITTEE ON WILDERNESS CAMP IN SURRY COUNTY

Low Gap School
Low Gap, North Carolina

January 23, 1980

ROGER COOK, PRINCIPAL, LOW GAP SCHOOL: If you others would go ahead and get your seats, we will go ahead and get started. I want to welcome all of you to Low Gap Elementary School. If we get tired of talking about any other subject, we will talk about having a bond issue for raising money for a new school building.

I am Roger Cook, Principal of this school, for those few I haven't met, and I welcome you again. I hope everything ends as joyful and peaceful as it is right now. I'll turn the meeting over to Senator Marion. He has the expertise of knowing all of these people that I don't know. Welcome!

SENATOR GEORGE W. MARION, JR.: Thank you, Roger. I would like to welcome all of you here tonight to this public hearing. First off, I would like to introduce to you some folks from Raleigh and some of my colleagues in the General Assembly. I'll start on my left:

Representative Clyde Auman, Member of the House from Moore County, is with us tonight. He has visited many of these camps and, Clyde, I am glad to have you with us.

Mr. Don Snow, who is a Surry County native, is serving on this Commission.

Representative Louise Brennan, who is my cochairman from the House, is a representative from Mecklenburg County.

John Young is our staff assistant here and John has done a tremendous job in working with us on this Commission.

Senator Donald Kincaid, from over in Lenoir, not only is familiar with this but worked constantly with me through the General Assembly as did Louise and Clyde. They are very familiar with this.

And, of course, Louis Comer whom I think most of you know here in Surry County. He also serves on the Commission.

I'll give you a little background of what we have done here and why we are here. Not so long ago, I was here in this particular auditorium and I would estimate, if my recollection serves me right, there were probably four to six hundred people here in opposition to the wilderness camp that was to be located here in Surry County. After that, the Surry County Commissioners passed a resolution opposing the camp because--I would assume they felt as I did representing the constituency--they felt they should oppose it because it was something that they thought was being shoved down the throats of the people. Well, I pursued this vigorously in Raleigh myself and got around to introducing a bill to cut off the funds and I got the bill passed on one particular day. But, for those of you who don't understand the legislative process, you might get one bill passed one day but tomorrow, within twenty-four hours, you can have a reconsideration. Well, I felt firmly at that time as I do now that, when I am representing a district when as many people as I thought were opposed to this particular camp or anything else, I ought to represent those people. And, I worked vigorously to pass the bill to cut off the funds but it seemed that the Governor and the Secretary of Human Resources and others --- They must've stayed up all night working and the next morning when the Appropriations Committee met I felt that we may not have enough votes to hold cutting off the funds. Tom Gilmore who is Assistant Secretary of Human Resources and I--maybe another one or two--had a little compromising to do which was that they would sign a contract to July of this year rather than two years until we could study this situation, visit the camps and hold some public hearings. So, we compromised on that basis so that we could do this and then, in the bill, I set the mechanism where we could have the study commission and study this. And this is the result. The membership was appointed by the Lieutenant Governor and the Speaker, and here we are tonight discussing it. We have held two meetings in Raleigh. We have heard from prison officials, prison department officials, human resources people, various people there at those meetings. We thought that this would be the ideal place to visit a camp and hold this meeting here tonight which we have done. I do not know at this time how much opposition remains to this camp and that is why we are here tonight to discuss it.

I would like to recognize Mr. Gilmore. Would you stand? He is the Assistant Secretary of Human Resources. We have various news media. Ken Hanes. Ken, you are with the Journal now, aren't you? And, would you gentlemen like to stand? Dale is with the Mt. Airy News as most of you know. I don't know this gentleman. WPAQ, of course, is with us. But, we are delighted you are all with us tonight.

I would like first of all to ask those who --- We wanted to be fair with everyone and I felt that it would be a fine time to let those, since we are in the Low Gap area, speak in opposition if there are those who would like to speak in opposition at this time

to the camp. The Commission's responsibility is to report back to the General Assembly in the Short Session. So, those of you who would like to speak in opposition if we have those at this time, I would ask you to come forward.

If you will for the news media and for those others present, would you please state your name?

CHARLES M. CARSON, LOW GAP RESIDENT: I'm Charles M. Carson. I would like to say that I still think the majority of people in Low Gap are opposed to the camp. I don't think that we got proper notice of this meeting. I think you can ask through the community about it and you will find that out and I also would like to say that, to the Legislature people, that you people are going to have to put a control on Dr. Morrow down there and the Governor has even had to call her down. That is all I have to say. We didn't know nothing about the meeting but we are still opposed to the camp. Thank you.

SENATOR MARION: Kit, I can say to you that you should have been familiar with the meeting. I've tried to conduct this in a gentlemanly way. I've tried to state my opposition to it, but I think everybody ought to be fair. You should've been familiar with it. It has been in the papers, I believe, and on the radio, and I was informed that you personally were called about this meeting tonight. So, ---

(Response from audience indistinguishable.)

SENATOR MARION: Okay, I was told that, you know. And I have tried to be fair in my conduct of these hearings and I just wanted you to know that I tried to inform everyone that I could. (Senator Marion reported that Mr. Carson stated that it was his father who was called according to Mr. Carson's comments that were indistinguishable as noted above.)

Anyone else want to speak in opposition? Okay, we've got Cama Merritt who would like to speak. And I would like you to do this, Cama, if I may. I don't want --- We've heard more pros than we have cons, I think, on this in Raleigh. If you would, I'd like --- We've got about five who would like to speak in favor of it and I would like, if you would, you to just limit your remarks to just three or four minutes, if you would. Thank you. Cama Merritt.

CAMA MERRITT, ATTORNEY: Can you hear me from here?

SENATOR MARION: Well, it just depends on how loud you can talk.

MRS. MERRITT: If you can't hear me, just raise your hand. I am Cama Merritt. I don't know who I am to talk about this, in a way, because I don't live near here. I live down in Mt. Airy and I don't have the fears and apprehensions that the people who live up here have about having this camp located near you. But, I would like to take a minute and tell you how I feel about it and why I feel

this way. I'm a mother and I am also a lawyer. When I first started practicing law, I was appointed to represent juvenile clients who had been brought to the Juvenile Court because of; well, the first one was really just a case of truancy and that child ended up at a training school because there just wasn't anything else that could be done and the court --- The judge felt that something should be done. Nothing else had worked with that particular child. The records on children who go to the training schools are very much like those sent to prison. They don't seem to reform these children and give them a chance at a new life and my understanding is that the records on these camps are just way better than the records of any other sort of effort that has been made to give children a new chance when they've started on this kind of track that looks like they are headed for trouble. And that is the reason I am for it.

SENATOR MARION: Thank you, Cama. Pam White. Pam, if you would, come around and speak into the mike. They are having some trouble, I think, picking up on it for some reason.

PAM WHITE, SURRY FRIENDS OF YOUTH: I am Pam White and I also live in Mt. Airy. I work with an agency called Surry Friends of Youth and the aim of this agency is to work with people that --- the kind of young people Cama was talking about, those people who are delinquent or predelinquent young people. Those who are having problems at home or at school. Surry Friends of Youth is an agency that takes court referrals and also school referrals. We work with young people who are having the kind of problems that ultimately leads to a program like the wilderness camp here. As a person working with that kind of agency, I visited the wilderness camp here on three or four occasions and I was always very favorably impressed with the boys who showed us around the camp and could tell us about what they were doing and the progress they are making here. The boys who are in these camps appear to me to be learning a new way of life, sort of a self-sufficient and a self-reliant way that I don't believe they can pick up in a training school and I think we are very fortunate to have this located in our area. And, I feel very strongly about it since I do come in contact with this kind of young people on a daily basis and I think we are very fortunate to have it here. Thank you.

SENATOR MARION: George Birchette.

GEORGE BIRCHETTE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SURRY FRIENDS OF YOUTH: Well, I am George Birchette. I am Executive Director of Surry Friends of Youth and, as Pam already said, we work with kids on a daily basis who have had contact with court systems and sometimes maybe there is no other place to send them other than training school, but, if we do that, we just are putting them out of the way and out of our minds. A lot --- Most of the time these kids don't deserve to be there. The wilderness camp serves as a residential alternative to training schools. I have been up there several times. I've visited with the people. They've even allowed us to bring van loads of people up there to visit the camps.

They've been courteous. They've showed us around. They have showed us what they've done. They've let us talk to the kids and the kids have been extremely proud of what they have accomplished while they were at the wilderness camp. And I think one of the things to keep in mind is that it is a voluntary thing on the part of these kids. They don't have to be there but they are working to improve themselves and the camp is offering them therapy to improve themselves and an alternative.

FROM THE FLOOR: Mr. Birchette, where are you from?

MR. BIRCHETTE: I, originally, am from Alamance County. I ---

FROM THE FLOOR: Where do you live now?

MR. BIRCHETTE: Mt. Airy.

SENATOR MARION: Linda Chaney.

LINDA CHANEY, JUVENILE COURT COUNSELOR: I'm Linda Chaney. I am a Juvenile Court Counselor. I have worked in that capacity all over Surry County for six years. Prior to that time, I worked with the Department of Social Services for five years and, so, for eleven years my main job has been working with young people. I live in the Fairview Community but I also belong to the Low Gap Wildlife Club and have a small tract of land over there. So, most of the time in the summer, I am in the Low Gap Community almost every weekend. In my job in working with young people I have taken them to training schools. I've tried other things. We have --- I am also on the Board of the Surry Friends of Youth and we operate a group home in Mt. Airy. That's another alternative but it is not as long term placement as the wilderness camp. I have visited the camp on two different occasions and have been very impressed with what they have done with the kids there. I have a case load of approximately between 40 and 45 kids that I work with on a day-to-day basis. I have kids that, if it could be worked out, could benefit very much from having a place like the wilderness camp to go that try to work with the kids and with the family and try to get them back into their home community. And I feel like it is a resource that I could use--and something I haven't had access to except in the last year. Thank you.

SENATOR MARION: Thank you. Steve Petlitz.

STEVE PETLITZ, REPRESENTATIVE OF MOUNT AIRY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE: Thank you, Senator. I am Steve Petlitz. I reside in Stewart's Creek Township, Sparta Road to be exact. I am here tonight representing the Mt. Airy Chamber of Commerce and I have a statement from the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce which, if you bear with me, I would like to read. "The Board of Directors of the Mt. Airy Chamber of Commerce would like to express its endorsement and support of the wilderness camp. It is a valuable asset for our area as it performs a good service for this area in the rehabilitation of youth under a well controlled procedure system."

Thank you.

SENATOR MARION: Thank you, Steve. Is there anyone else here at this time? What's your last name?

FROM THE FLOOR: Woody Flippen, sir.

SENATOR MARION: Woody, come on up here. Woody Flippen.

WOODY FLIPPEN, MINISTER: I am a minister in Low Gap Community and I have visited the camp on several occasions. I have been with the kids and they are a wonderful bunch of kids. I don't know why anyone would be opposed to anything so wonderful in this way of life. I have been up there. I fall in love with those children every time I go. It is a wonderful thing. Most people that is opposed have never been to see what they are opposed to. They don't know what they are opposed to. Just --- I know the camp directors and all would invite you to come and to visit and to see what you are opposed to. I do know that so many people have said many different things. Now there's not the biggest majority of Low Gap. Now the people that I talk to are not opposed to it. I don't know where they are tonight but they are not opposed to this camp. I've visited several churches around in our community--across on the mountain which is above the camp--and none of them up there seem to oppose it. So, I just want to say that it is a wonderful thing. I think it is a wonderful thing for these kids. I have children of my own that I would like to go to a place like that rather than a juvenile hall if they get in trouble. On one occasion, my youngest boy has been in some trouble but it was settled before it had to go to court and I'm proud of that--that it didn't have to--I'm not proud of the boy because he done a wrong thing and, as parents of boys and girls, we all do know that they get in trouble. We can't keep our eyes on them every minute. These kids is what is up there, and I do know it has been a wonderful thing. I went around with them singing Christmas carols at a few homes which invited us to come during the Christmas season and I don't understand why anyone is opposed to it. It is a wonderful thing and I stand one hundred percent for it.

SENATOR MARION: Thank you, preacher. It was the responsibility, as I related to you before I believe, for this Commission to study this. I can assure you that there were probably four to six hundred people here and I still stick by that, and most of them were in opposition to it. I don't know where these people are tonight. I can't explain that. And, Clyde, I told you people the truth down there when I told you that there was that many people in opposition to it and I don't know what happened to them, but I can tell you this. I think I told my wife last night that never had I, since serving as many times as I have in the General Assembly, probably worried over any piece of legislation more than I have this and gone to the extent and stayed awake at night worrying about this. I am certainly not opposed to youth or young children or rehabilitation of young children, but I felt that it was my duty and responsibility and I 'm not one bit sorry for what I did.

And, I am not saying at this point that I won't continue to oppose something but I think that there has been --- Evidentally, from my physical view here tonight, there must have been some changes in the hearts of the people in Low Gap. But I felt it was my responsibility at that time to represent them in a fair and equal and impartial manner which I felt that I have done and I have no amends to make on that. I have worked vigorously to cut off the funds because I felt that many people were opposed and I really feel in my heart that they were at that time. But, as I say, I don't know where they all are tonight in opposition to it and I don't know how much problems they have had so far with this camp and I personally haven't heard of the problems but it is the duty and responsibility of this Commission--what I want you to understand--is to study the impact of this camp on the community, the impact of the camp on the youth, the cost of the program compared to other programs in the State. And that is our duty to report back to the next Session of the General Assemlby. I feel that our Commission has worked hard, that we have been deliberate thus far and we will continue to do so and I sincerely thank all of those who are serving on this Commission for their dedication and hard work. Mrs. Carson, did you have a ---

MRS. CARSON: Well, I would just like to say you were questioning why the people haven't turned out for this meeting. How many meetings have we, the community, attended? We signed a petition and everything was made perfectly clear a child could understand that we did not want this camp. But we got it and we are stuck with it. So, what is the point in coming out to a meeting?

SENATOR MARION: Well, I can answer this. I don't believe that the minds of this Commission is made up as to what recommendation to make. And, it was certainly this meeting --- This meeting was one of the most important meetings in my mind because I have worked hard and vigorously to opposing it and, if there were ever going to be any here to oppose the camp, they ought to have been here tonight. I can say that to you because we have got to make a recommendation to the next Session of the General Assembly whether to cut the funds off. I got the funds cut off in one day, but I wasn't sure the next day that that was going to happen. I know enough about the legislation to know that you've got to make compromises which I did. I worked night and day. As I said, I am not going to make any amends on it and, if anyone in the Low Gap area thinks I didn't work hard, that is just tough because I did and I am not sorry of anything I did and this would have been a great opportunity for them tonight to express their views. I am saying that to you.

FROM THE FLOOR: What the people feel like is that it's been shoved down their throats.

SENATOR MARION: Mr. Gardner.

CARROLL GARDNER: I am glad you calmed down there for a second.

SENATOR MARION: Yes sir, I am all right.

MR. GARDNER: When you make your report to the Department of Human Resources or to the various legislative committees, encourage the Department of Human Resources, when they establish another camp as this one, to meet with and consult with the people in the community before announcing that they are going to do wonderful things. I think really the whole thing boils down to a question of the people here at Low Gap feeling left out, reading in the newspaper that this is going to be done and they knew nothing about in in advance. They weren't contacted. They weren't consulted. This concept was not promoted. It was not accepted in the community. This is the main thing. I think the people of Low Gap are concerned about this. I am sure the community, from all reports that I get --- The wilderness camp is doing a good job. Many of the fears that many in the community had have not materialized. These youngsters are not leaving the wilderness camp itself or invading residences or things like this. So, many of the fears are being alleviated but, on the other hand, I think that the Department of Human Resources could in the future avoid this sort of public outcry, resistance, and resentment. These people have a point to make and I think they've made their point by opposing it as they have in the past and, if you will recall, when we had the meeting at Surry Community College, they came en masse. There were hundreds of them and they were concerned because it was confidential. It was shoved down their throats. In spite of the fact that it was a good thing, they preferred that folks approach them with gentility and persuasion. Now, these people here in Low Gap will give you the shirt off their backs if you need them and if you ask them and don't take them.

FROM THE FLOOR: Well, Mr. Gardner, we are a pretty good bunch of people.

SENATOR MARION: Mr. Gardner, I want to thank you very much and I told some of the people today exactly, almost, what you said to me and I really firmly believe that Mr. Gilmore can say that the Department of Human Resources has learned its lesson. Tom, would you say that it is the truth?

TOM GILMORE, DEPUTY SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES: I would like to add that the Department of Human Resources has made some errors and we regret that. We should have had more publicity and touched base with more people in the Low Gap area. And, I assure you that I have listened to what you have had to say. I think we have learned from this situation and I think that a few people did make some mistakes, but I think it was a mistake of the heart, anxious to have a camp here as quickly as possible for some young kids that really needed attention. I appreciate your attendance here and I appreciate your support.

SENATOR MARION: I would like to just furnish you, if I may, our meeting in Raleigh on November 28. Our minutes --- A paragraph in it, Carroll --- This is one of the things that perturbed me more than anything--the statement attributed to Mr. Barnett about the bootleggers and deerhunters. I would like to read this response

from him that he made publicly at that meeting. "In reply to question by Senator Marion, Mr. Barnett stated that the statement attributed to him in the Winston-Salem Journal 'all you have to deal with (at the wilderness camp in Surry County) were bootleggers and deerhunters' was taken out of context. He explained that he was in the presence of reporters at the Reynolda House talking about the problems of dogs running through the property and he mentioned bootleggers and deerhunters as other factors to which some thought would have to be given, etc. ... He apologized for having made the statement, stating he was aware it had hurt the program. He, however, stated that the article made no reference to the principal subject, dogs." Now, I think he did make an apology there which we had to accept and, whether the article was taken out of context or whatever, but it shocked me, I suppose, and made me very mad too, Carroll, but that was the apology. Anyone else have any comments?

LOUIS COMER, MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE: Mr. Chairman, I would like to add to what has been said here tonight. I know how strongly the feelings ran after this thing was announced. Since then, I have had an opportunity to discuss this in depth with Mr. Barnett. I think it was --- He was not misquoted. I think he said it but I think he--from what I could gather from talking with him--meant it in a context different to what it came out. I don't think he meant to be derogatory toward Surry County and the people of Low Gap and I think that on several occasions, including the one you mentioned at the meeting in Raleigh, he has extended an apology and has come forth and has been man enough to say that he made a mistake and he was sorry for it and I think that, when a man does this, we should give that due consideration and accept his apology. I don't know of anything more that he could do. He goofed and he apologized.

SENATOR MARION: I would like to introduce Representative Diamont. David Diamont came in and David worked very closely with me in Raleigh on this particular item and Dave, do you have any comments you would like to make?

DAVID DIAMONT, REPRESENTATIVE, PILOT MOUNTAIN, 28TH DISTRICT: Thanks, George. I don't know that I have anything prepared, not being here the first fifteen minutes. I would like to support some things said so far concerning the camp and how it came about. One thing I was not informed of until late in the summer of 1978 is the opposition to the camp. I can assure you that Senator Marion worked extremely hard in trying to voice what we felt at that time. We really attempted to stop funding of the wilderness camp and I can tell you that one time we had it pulled out of Appropriations Committee and then the powers that be got their folks together and on the next day they put the money back into the budget. Quite frankly, neither Senator Marion or myself had the power to do the things that we felt at that time was appropriate to do. One thing I might add. Tom Gilmore has worked real close with both George and me to try to open up a good line of communication and better understanding of what the camp is about. Senator Marion and I, in

our looking back, believe that it was implied in the public hearings up here that the camp would not be built because of the kind of opposition existing in the county. That was the implication. And then there was a long period of silence in Raleigh. Then we found out that the decision was made by Human Resources to go ahead with the camp and that was done in late November of 1978. I think that Human Resources should have made a little better attempt to get back in touch with the people here instead of implying one thing and doing something else. And that left a big communication gap. And I think --- I want to add one more time that Senator Marion at all times worked extremely hard, even to his offending some other people and affecting some other legislation by voicing what he felt was the will of this community at the time. I don't have the knowledge exactly how to gauge the community now as far as feelings for the wilderness camp. I sort of feel like that from the way Mr. Carson expressed himself. It is there and there is really not a whole lot that George or I can do. I felt like we sort of fired our big guns last spring and we couldn't stop it then. And, I feel like you have to live with it. It might be the wrong attitude and Senator Marion might disagree.

SENATOR MARION: I'd like to introduce you to Mr. Brennan from Mecklenburg, Representative Brennan's husband. He is editor of the Charlotte Observer. Sally Auman, Representative Auman's wife is here. Glad to have you, Sally. Sally's always sweet to me and we appreciate it. Are any of the county commissioners here tonight? Sheriff Hall, I would like to have you stand and welcome to the meeting. Do you have any comments?

REPRESENTATIVE BRENNAN: Let me ask him ---

SENATOR MARION: Okay, Louise.

REPRESENTATIVE BRENNAN: I'd just like to ask him if there have been any problems since the wilderness camp has been established within the community? I gathered, from this gentleman's remarks, there had been none.

MR. HALL: Not to my knowledge, no.

SENATOR MARION: Anyone else have any comments?

REPRESENTATIVE BRENNAN: Judge Brewer may.

SENATOR MARION: Where's the judge? Judge Brewer? Where --- You hid on me back there. Judge Coy Brewer from Fayetteville. He has worked very closely with these organizations and Coy's father happens to be a real good friend of mine. Coy, we would like to welcome you to Surry County. Thank you for coming. Of course, all of you are special to me and I am glad all of you are here.

FROM THE FLOOR: I think one reason why some were not here tonight is that the people didn't think that there was any reason for them to come since the wilderness camp has already been built.

SENATOR MARION: Anyone else?

FROM THE FLOOR: What about the --- Would you tell us a little bit about whose money is going to run this thing?

SENATOR MARION: Okay, Tom, how about, if you will, in a capsule explain the funding from the State and how this works to these people here.

MR. GILMORE: This is one of the beautiful success stories -- how the private sector; how the Eckerd Foundation and many other groups, corporations, foundations; and others donated money to the State to build this camp. There's not one tax dollar in the buildings on this camp site. Gordon Hanes donated the land. You need to know that there are North Carolina citizens that were appointed by the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and the Speaker of the House, Secretary of the Department of Human Resources, and by the Eckerd's Foundation that really make the decision on this camp. The State of North Carolina does provide funds to run this camp, but let me tell you it is about half what it costs you as taxpayers for the same type of individuals put in training schools. For example, at C. A. Dillon it costs in the area of $25,000 per year per child. The cost at a wilderness camp is less than $12,000 per year. Now, these are my kids and your kids and they have great problems. So, for the investment, you get a better return than I think of any program I have seen. I will be glad to answer any questions. We have with us Mr. Gerald Rehm from the Jack Eckerd Foundation. I know they have given $8 or $9 million to this program. If I could, Mr. Chairman, I would like to yield to Mr. Rehm.

GERALD S. REHM, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ECKERD FOUNDATION EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM CAMPING PROGRAM: We would love very much for you people to come and meet our camp director, come and view our camp. We would be very pleased to work out a time agreeable with us and your community. In fact, go out and have supper, have breakfast and dinner with these youngsters and see for yourself--enjoy their progress.

SENATOR MARION: I would like to thank you, all of you, again for coming tonight and if --- John, thank you for coming up and helping us. John has been a lot of help to this Commission and again thank you. Mr. Rehm.

MR. REHM: I would like to point out one more thing. On behalf of the staff at Eckerd Foundation, Senator, I want you to know sincerely that we respect you for doing the kind of job of representation you did for your community. It was a form of public decision. I would have done the same thing that you did. I want you to know that my people applaud you for it.

SENATOR MARION: I would like to thank you and I'd like to say to the people of Low Gap and the people of Surry County, to the people of North Carolina, and all of you here tonight that I can go home and sleep with good conscience thinking that I have done what I felt was right. I would like to thank you and the meeting is adjourned.

(Edited by John Young, Human Resources Staff Anaylst.)